بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

There are three conditions that must be fulfilled in order to use the weak Hadith. These conditions are laid down by Imam al Hafidh Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani .

- أن يكون الضعف غير شديد.

- أن يندرج الحديث تحت أصل معمول به

- ألا يعتقد عند العمل به ثبوته، بل يعتقد الاحتياط

1- The weakness shouldn’t be severe.

2- The weak Hadith should be used under already well-established principles (and should not bring in ideas of its own.)

3- When a weak Hadith is used (after it fulfills the above two conditions), it should not be firmly believed to be said by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), [lest we refer to him (peace be upon him) that which he did not say.]

Reference :

Tadreeb ar Rawi , 1/456

Fath ul Mughees , 1/268

Daeef (weak) Hadith is better than (and preferred over) Qiyas and Raai [analogy and opinion]

Shaykh Ibn Qayyim writes :

أَصْحَابُ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ - مُجْمِعُونَ عَلَى أَنَّ مَذْهَبَ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ أَنَّ ضَعِيفَ الْحَدِيثِ عِنْدَهُ أَوْلَى مِنْ الْقِيَاسِ وَالرَّأْيِ

The As-haab(companions) of Abu Hanifa [Allah mercy upon them] are unanimous upon the Madh-hab of Abu Hanifa ,that Weak Hadith is superior than Qiyas and Raai (analogy & opinion) .

[I'lam al Muwaqqi'een , 1/61]

Allama Ibn Hazm writes :

أَنَّ الْحَنَفِيِّينَ يَقُولُونَ: إنَّ ضَعِيفَ الْأَثَرِ أَوْلَى مِنْ الْقِيَاسِ

The Hanafees say, " Weak Narration is superior to Qiyas "

[Ibn Hazm , Al Muhalla , 10/289]

قول الإمام أحمد: ضعيف الحديث خير من الرأى.

Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal said, " (to act upon) A weak Hadith is better than (to follow) the opinion (of people or individual)."

[Jame bayan al Ilm wa Fadhlihi , 2/170]
[Majmu al Fatawa Ibn Taymiya ,18/52]

وَقَدْ قَالَ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ -: ضَعِيفُ الْحَدِيثِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ الرَّأْيِ

Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal said , “ Weak Hadith is dearer to me than Opinion (raai) ”

[Ibn Hazm , Al Muhalla , 3/61]

قَول أَحْمد بن حَنْبَل الْعَمَل بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيف أولى من الْقيَاس

Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal said , “ To act upon a weak Hadith is better than Qiyas ” .

[Zarkashi , An Nukat ala Muqaddimah ibn Salah , 1/94]

قال ابن منده: وكذلك أبو داود يأخذ مأخذه، ويخرج الإسناد الضعيف إذا لم يجد في الباب غيره، لأنه أقوى عنده من رأي الرجال

Ibn Mandah reported from **Imam Abu Dawud**, that Abu Dawud used to cite the chain of transmission of a weak hadith if he did not find other than it under that particular heading (*baab*), and that he considered it stronger evidence than opinion of people .

[Tadreeb al Rawi , Page : 111]
[Al Shaza al Fiyah min Ulum Ibn Salah , 1/246]

Weak Ahadtih are acceptable and and can be acted upon in the matters of Fadhail ,Targheeb and Tarheeb .
[Virtues , Persuasion and Intimidation]

Imam Abdur Rahman bin Mahdi said :

إِذَا رَوِينَا فِي الثَّوَابِ وَالْعِقَابِ وَفَضَائِلِ الْأَعْمَالِ، تَسَاهَلْنَا فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ وَالرِّجَالِ، وَإِذَا رَوِينَا فِي الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ وَالْأَحْكَامِ تَشَدَّدْنَا فِي الرِّجَالِ

" Whenever we narrated (ahadith) about ,reward and punishment or Fadhail al A'maal we used to be very lenient on Asaneed (chains) and Rijaal (narrators) ,but when we narrated concerning issues of Halal & Haram or Ahkaam (rulings) we used to be strict on the Rijaal (narrators) "

[Hakim , Al Madhkal , 1/29 # 10 &

Khahteeb Baghdadi ,Jami Ikhlaq ar Rawi , 2/91 # 1267]

Imam al Auzai :

أَنَّ الأَوْزَاعِيَّ حَدِيْثُه ضَعِيْفٌ مِنْ كَوْنِهِ يَحتَجُّ بِالمَقَاطِيْعِ، وَبِمَرَاسِيْلِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ

Imam Dhahabi has recorded that Imam Awzai did Istadlaal from weak Ahadith ,(like) Maqtoo'aat (disconnected) and Maraseel of people of Shaam (Syria)

[Siyyaru A'lam an-Nubula ,7/114]

Imam Abdullah Ibn Mubrak :

قال ابن أبي حاتم ثنا أبي عبدة قال : قيل لابن المبارك – وروى عن رجل حديثاً – فقيل : هذا رجل ضعيف ! فقال : يحتمل أن يروى عنه هذا القدر أو مثل هذه الأشياء.

قلت لعبدة: مثل أي شئ كان ؟ قال: في أدب في موعظة في زهد.

Ibn Abi Hatim said, he heard from Abi Ubdah who said , It was said to **Abdullah Ibn Mubrak** that A man narrated a (certain) hadith and he(ibn Mubarak) was told that the narrator is weak .
Ibn Mubarak said, " One may narrate such narrations from [a weak narrator] .
Ubdah asked him , " 'Such narrations' like ?
Ibn Mubarak said , " (those narrations pertaining to) Good conduct (adab), admonition (maw'iza), and Asceticism (zuhd)."

[Ibn Abi Hatim , Al Jarh wa Ta'deel , 2/31]
[Ibn Rajab , Sharh Ilal Tirmizi , 1/73]

Sayings of Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal regarding weak Ahadith

قَوْلُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ :إِذَا جَاءَ الْحَلَالُ وَالْحَرَامُ شَدَّدْنَا فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ، وَإِذَا جَاءَ التَّرْغِيبُ وَالتَّرْهِيبُ تَسَاهَلْنَا فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal Said:

“We used to become strict (on asaneed/chains) in matters of halaal, haraam and Shari’ah. And for (ahadith dealing with) Persuasion and intimidation (Targhib wa Tarhib) we used to become very lenient (easy) in case of Asaneed (Chain of narrators).”

[Majmu ul Fatawa Ibn Taymiyya , 18/65]

Similarly it is narrated from Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal

by Khateeb Baghdadi in his Al Kifaya fi Ilmi Riwaya , 1/134 :

ذَا رَوَيْنَا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ وَالسُّنَنِ

وَالْأَحْكَامِ تَشَدَّدْنَا فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ , وَإِذَا رَوَيْنَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي

فَضَائِلِ الْأَعْمَالِ وَمَا لَا يَضَعُ حُكْمًا وَلَا يَرْفَعُهُ تَسَاهَلْنَا فِي الْأَسَانِيدِ

Also **Imam Ibn Muflih** shows permissibility to act upon Weak Ahadith in Fadhail al A’mal and Targhib wa Tarhib ,and refers this ruling to Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal .

وَالَّذِى قَطَعَ بِهِ غَيْرُ وَاحِدٍ مِمَّنْ صَنَّفَ فِي عُلُومِ الْحَدِيثِ حِكَايَةً عَنْ الْعُلَمَاءِ أَنَّهُ

يُعْمَلُ بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيفِ فِيمَا لَيْسَ فِيهِ تَحْلِيلٌ وَلَا تَحْرِيمٌ كَالْفَضَائِلِ، وَعَنْ الْإِمَامِ

أَحْمَدَ مَا يُوَافِقُ هَذَا.

See : Adab ash Shariah ,by Ibn Muflih , 2/301

Ibn Taymiyya writes :

لكن أحمد بن حنبل وغيره من العلماء جوزوا أن يروى فى فضائل الأعمال ما لم يُعلم أنه ثابت إذا لم يعلم أنه كذب.

" Ahmad ibn Hanbal and other scholars permitted the narration [of hadith] regarding the Virtues of deeds (fadhail al A'mal) what is not established [as authentic] as long as it is not known that it is a lie."

[Ibn Taymiyya ,Qaida Jaleela fi Tawassul wal Wasila, 1/176]

Imam Abu Talib al Makki writes :

الأحاديث فى الترغيب فى الآخرة والتزهيد فى الدنيا والترهيب لوعد الله تعالى وفى فضائل الأعمال وتفضيل الأصحاب متقبلة محتملة على كل حال مقاطيعها ومراسيلها لا تعارض ولا ترد، وكذلك فى أهوال القيامة ووصف زلازلها وعظائمها لا تنكر بعقل بل تتقبل بالتصديق والتسليم كذلك كان السلف يفعلون

For the Ahadith (concerning) Persuation for : fear of Afterlife and abstaining from (pleasures of) world , intimidation for Allah's obedience and Fadhail al Amal (virtues of deeds) , any kind of narrations from Sahaba ,though Maraseel (pl of mursal) or Maqaate'e (pl of Maqtu) will neither be rejected nor opposed . And this is the way of our salaf (pious predecessors)

[Abu Talib Makki , Qootul Quloob , 1/ 301]

Imam Ibn Qudamah writes :

فإن النوافل والفضائل لا يشترط صحة الحديث فيها

In matters of Nawafil and Fadhail ,there is no condition for the health of Hadees . (i,e no compulsion that hadith should be sahih).

[Al Mughni , 1/799]

Shaykh Ibn Taymiiya Writes :

فمقادير الثواب والعقاب وأنواعه إذا روى فيها حديث لا نعلم أنه موضوع

جازت روايته والعمل به

"Therefore, the levels of Thawaab and reckoning and its types, when this is narrated in a hadith, which we dont know to be Mawdu, it is allowed to transmit it and to act according to it"

[Majmu ul Fatawa , 18/66]

Imam Ibn Humman states :

الاستحباب يثبت بالضعيف غير الموضوع

Istihbab can be proven from Weak Hadith as long as the narration is not a fabrication.

[Fath ul Qadeer , 2/139]

Imam Nawawi writes :

قال العلماءُ من المحدّثين والفقهاء وغيرهم :يجوز ويُستحبّ العمل فى الفضائل والترغيب والترهيب بالحديث الضعيف ما لم يكن موضوعاً

The Scholars of Hadith , Fuqaha (jurists) ,and others have said that ,in the matters of Fadhail , Targhib wa Tarhib it is recommended (mustahab) to act upon Weak Ahadith ,but it should not be a Mawdhu .

[Al Adhkaar , 1/8]

Imam Nawawi also writes :

وقد قدما اتِّفَاقَ الْعُلَمَاءِ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيفِ فِي فَضَائِلِ الْأَعْمَالِ دُونَ الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ

“ It is agreed amongst scholars ,(it is permissible) to act on weak hadith in matters of Fadhail al Amaal , but not in matters of Halal and Haram ” .

[Al Majmu ,Sharh al Muhazab , 3/248]
[Badr al Muneer , 4/203]

Imam Ibn Daqeeq al Eed writes :

وقد اتفق العلماء على جواز العمل بالحديث الضعيف فى فضائل الأعمال

“ It is agreed amongst scholars (of hadith) that it is permissible to act upon the Weak Hadith (hadees e daeef) in Fadhail al amaal (virtues of deeds) ”

[Sharah al Arbaeen , Page : 03]

[Al Imta al Arba'een , 1/71]

Imam Suyuti writes :

ويجوز عند أهل الحديث وغيرهم التساهل فى الأسانيد) الضعيفة (ورواية ما سوى الموضوع من الضعيف والعمل به من غير بيان ضعفه فى غير صفات الله تعالى) وما يجوز ويستحيل عليه وتفسير كلامه (والأحكام كالحلال والحرام و) غيرهما ، وذلك كالقصص وفضائل الأعمال والمواعظ وغيرها (مما لا تعلق له بالعقائد والأحكام) ومن نقل عنه ذلك : ابن حنبل وابن مهدى وابن المبارك ، قالوا : إذا روينا فى الحلال والحرام شددنا وإذا روينا فى الفضائل ونحوها تساهلنا

According to the scholars of Hadith and others , it is to be lenient on weak chains (ahadith) ,and for (all such) weak ahadith other than (except) the Mawdhu ,(and those)which do not deal with sifaat of Allah , matters of Halal & Haram ,Ahakam or Aqaid(beliefs) , and deals with the Fadhail al Amal (virtues of deeds) , (moral) Stories , (moralizing) sermons etc ,It is permissible to act upon them (i,e weak ahadith) .
And those Hadith scholars from whom (this rule) is narrated ,includes :

Ahmed bin Hanbal ,Abdur Rahman bin Mahdi ,Ibn al Mubarak . They say , " When we narrate ahadith related to Halal and Haram ,we become strict on them (chains) ,but while narrating ahadith related to Fadhail ,we become lenient (on chains) .

[Tadreeb ur Rawi , 1/350]

Imam Suyuti writes after a Hadith :

مَعَ أَنهم اجْمَعُوا على جَوَاز الْعَمَل بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيف فِي فَضَائِل الْأَعْمَال

They (scholars of hadith) unanimously agreed upon permissibility of acting upon weak Hadith in (matters of) Fadhail al A'mal .

[Sharh Sunan Ibn Maaja , 1/98]

Imam Muhammad al Hattab al Maliki writes :

فَقَدْ اتَّفَقَ الْعُلَمَاءُ عَلَى جَوَازِ الْعَمَلِ بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيفِ فِي فَضَائِلِ الْأَعْمَالِ وَاغْتِنَامًا لِلثَّوَابِ

" The scholars are agreed upon the permissibility to act upon the Weak Hadith in the matters of Fadhail al A'mal and earning reward " .

[Mawahib al Jaleel fi Sharh Mukhtasar al Khaleel , 1/ 17]

Imam Shahabuddin Ramli writes ,referring to Imam Nawawi :

إِجْمَاعَ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ بِالْحَدِيثِ الضَّعِيفِ فِي الْفَضَائِلِ

It is consensus (Ijma) of People(scholars) of Hadith ,to act upon weak Ahadith in Fadhail

[Fatawa Ramli , 4/383]

Imam Mullah Ali Qari writes **:**

الضعيف يعمل به فی الفضائل الاعمال اتفاقا

" It is agreed upon that , it is permissible to act upon weak hadith in matters of Fadhail al Aamal "

[Mawdhuat al Kabeer , Page : 63]

------- M .T.Mohiuddin--------
